

Joseph A. Blick, Jr., a dedicated public servant and worthy recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, an honor awarded by the governor of North Carolina.

In the journey of life, it is a privilege to meet an individual like Joe Blick—a man of strong faith who always makes time for his family, church, and the local community. Joe rarely utters the word “no,” but instead eagerly seeks opportunities to help others. He has been a role model for the Greenville youth by volunteering to coach sports or help with the youth group at St. Peter Catholic Church. He is a man who teaches fairness and compassion in and out of the courtroom and has always led by example.

A prime example of Mr. Blick's generous nature comes in his decision to retire a year early, giving up his full retirement status in order to accept a teaching position at St. Peter's Catholic School. As always, he has chosen to follow the will of God and understands that teaching the young men and women who represent America's future is his calling.

This new position will represent a return to the classroom for Judge Blick, who taught and coached students in Moore County, North Carolina, before attending law school at Wake Forest University. After graduating, he went on to work for 16 years as an assistant district attorney before assuming the title of district court judge and presiding over the 3A judicial district for 14 years.

Joe's commitment to Pitt County has been admired by many, including myself. In recognition of his extensive record of public service, he has been honored with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine—a prestigious award presented to individuals who display a strong dedication to the state of North Carolina.

I join with Joe's wife, Mary; his two sons and daughters-in-law, Jeff and Caroline and Brian and Kristen; and his three grandchildren in congratulating him on his many achievements. During my many years of friendship with the Blick family, I had the distinct honor of nominating Brian to the naval academy, from which he graduated in May of 2012.

John Wesley once said that “[o]ne of the principal rules of religion is to lose no occasion of serving God. And, since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbor; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.”

Judge Blick has certainly exemplified this spirit of service, and I am confident that his dedication to God, his family, and his community will continue as he takes this next step in life's journey. I am grateful for Judge Blick's tireless commitment to the Greenville community and pleased to have him recognized by the United States Congress, an honor which he truly deserves.

TRIBUTE TO MR. MARK SHEPPARD, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 18, 2013*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of an influential and beloved

Mobilian who played an instrumental role in the growth of the Port of Mobile and the regional economy. Mr. Mark Sheppard, Vice President for Trade and Development at the Alabama State Port Authority, recently passed away at the age of 61.

A native of Mobile and a graduate of the University of South Alabama, Mr. Sheppard enjoyed a maritime career which spanned more than 30 years, beginning with a management trainee position for United States Lines. He later worked for a number of companies along the Gulf of Mexico, including Hapag-Lloyd, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines and Nedlloyd Lines, where he managed direct sales, marketing and integrated logistics.

Mr. Sheppard joined the Alabama State Port Authority in 2005, where he led trade and carrier development for the Authority's intermodal investments. Most notably, he is credited—despite a global economic recession—with expanding both business and ocean carrier service at the authority's new container terminal between 2008 and 2010. That trend continued in 2011, when year-over-year container traffic increased by another 31 percent.

His leadership was further evident in 2012, when the Port Authority's containerized, steel and export coal volumes all posted significant growth. And growth is projected to continue with planned investments in intermodal rail, warehousing and terminal upgrades to expand capacity and market reach.

In addition to his responsibilities with the Port Authority, Mr. Sheppard also remained active in the broader maritime and international communities, serving on the Board of Directors for the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Council and as vice chairman and chairman-elect for the Alabama Germany Partnership.

Alabama State Port Authority Director James K. Lyons reflected on the loss of Mr. Sheppard and his valuable contributions to Alabama and the Gulf Coast: “Mark Sheppard's sudden passing comes as a deep shock to our maritime and international trade community. He was a key member of our team and a good friend.”

On behalf of the people of Alabama, I wish to extend my personal condolences to his family, including his daughter, Jessica, who is a member of my Washington, DC office staff, as well as his brother Tim Sheppard; and two sisters, Brenda Sheppard and Sonya Bell. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

NELSON MANDELA  
INTERNATIONAL DAY

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 18, 2013*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to President Nelson Mandela and to commemorate the 5th anniversary of “Nelson Mandela International Day.” On this special day, the thoughts, prayers, and wishes of all Americans, and peace loving people the world over, are with Nelson Mandela and his family.

In 2009, the United Nations dedicated this day in recognition of Nelson Mandela's commitment to humanity as a human rights lawyer, a prisoner of conscience, an international

peacemaker, and as the first elected president of a free, democratic, and multiracial Republic of South Africa. Nelson Mandela dedicated his life to serving humanity in the fields of conflict resolution, race relations, the promotion and protection of human rights, reconciliation, gender equality, the rights of children and other vulnerable groups, the uplift of poor and underdeveloped communities, and the struggle for democracy internationally and the promotion of a world culture of peace.

In honoring these dreams, hopes, goals, and acts, the United Nations calls upon people everywhere to devote 67 minutes today to helping others, one minute honoring each year that Nelson Mandela devoted to us, humanity. Through our service to others, we honor the achievements and sacrifices of Nelson Mandela.

Today we honor the life and work of a man who by his courage, commitment to justice, grace in the face of unearned suffering, and capacity to forgive continues to inspire the world.

In the words of Nelson Mandela: “For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”

Happy birthday to one of the greatest men of our time.

EGYPT

**HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 18, 2013*

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I watched with great interest the recent events in Egypt where millions took to the street in support of real democracy, real freedom, and the actual upholding and protection of fundamental human rights. Sadly, those who promote and preach violence continue to assert the dominance of their ideology and rights to the exclusion and detriment of anyone who does not agree with them.

In light of these recent events, I would like to submit for the Record a short letter from the Board of Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt regarding Egypt and the desires of the Egyptian people.

The business community, the human rights and democracy activists, and even Egyptian government officials are asking for our support for democracy and freedom.

In light of these recent events, it is vital to note that due to the complete absence of an impeachment process and a working parliament, there was no established mechanism for a transition of power—the only course of action available and possible to the people was “popular impeachment.”

It is critical that the Egyptian people know that we stand with them in this time of transition as they seek, once again, to draft a Constitution that protects and upholds the rights of all Egyptians and maintains international norms and standards, and as they seek to build and strengthen institutions and processes of democracy, transparency, and freedom.

I urge the Congress to respond to recent events in Egypt by supporting and working with those in the country who desire to protect and uphold fundamental human rights and to